

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated December 10, 2003, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration based on the above claim amendment and the following remarks.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

Claims 25-43 were examined and rejected as follows:

- Claims 25-26 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Frazier (U.S. Patent No. 5,673,969);
- Claims 25-27, 29, 33, and 35-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tsao (U.S. Patent No. 6,006,967);
- Claims 25, 31-33, and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by McDonald (U.S. Patent No. 289,115);
- Claims 25-27, 28-30, and 33-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Doering (U.S. Patent No. 3,604,750);
- Claims 25-27, 28-30, and 33-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Golder (U.S. Patent No. 5,310,242);
- Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Smith et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,499,860);
- Claims 25, 31-33, and 35-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schraeder et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,702,523);
- Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Abe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,992,028);
- Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by McLennan (U.S. Patent No. 4,093,307);
- Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Meyer (U.S. Patent No. 2,237,057);
- Claims 25-28, 33-36, and 38-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Alexander et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,871,210);

- Claims 25-28, and 31-33, 35, 38-39, 40-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Allum (U.S. Patent No. 5,354,121);
- Claims 25, 31-33, 35-36, 38, and 40-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Davis (EP Patent No. 0 410 693); and
- Claims 40-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lacoste (U.S. Patent No. 5,628,548).

Claims 25, 31-33, and 40 have been amended. Each of independent claims 25, 33, and 40 has been amended to indicate all limitations of claim 1 of the parent application 10/096,914, now U.S. Patent No. 6,616,242.

Applicant believes the inclusion of the new limitations in each of independent claims 25, 33, and 40 overcomes all prior art references of record. Accordingly, Applicant believes that all pending claims 25-43 are in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone Applicant's undersigned representative at the number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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